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OF all the eaſtern ſtories that have hitherto made their appearance in Engliſh, there is not one that conveys ſo perfect and beautiful a moral as that of the prince Ruzvanſchad and the princeſs Cheheriſtany, in the firſt volume of the Perſian Tales. Ruzvanſchad was king of China, and Cheheriſtany princeſs of an iſland of Genies. They fell deſperately in love with each other, and after the uſual delays, were married in due form in the iſland of Cheheriſtan, where the lady was queen. But before the ſolemnization of this marriage,

riage, the princeſs of the Genies addreſſed the king of China in the following manner. "I am not going, "ſaid ſhe, to make your majeſty any unreaſonable re- "queſt, though the power I have over you, and the "ſuperiority of my nature, claim obedience in all "things; I ſhall only demand a promiſe from you, "that for the honour of your queen, and for our mu- "tual happineſs, you will blindly comply with me in "every thing I have a mind to do. The Genies are "never in the wrong. If therefore at any time my "actions ſhould happen to appear unaccountable and "extravagant, ſay within yourſelf, my wife has reaſon "for what ſhe does: for it is impoſſible that we ſhould "live together in love and harmony, unleſs you im- "plicitly believe that I am always in the right." The king, according to the univerſal cuſtom of lovers, promiſed very readily to think in all things as his princeſs would have him; and the marriage was celebrated with all imaginable ſplendor.

THE ſequel of the ſtory informs us, that his majeſty of China did not abſolutely keep his royal promiſe; for that upon certain trifling occaſions, ſuch, for inſtance, as the queen's flinging her ſon into the fire, giving her daughter to be devoured by a wild beaſt, deſtroying the proviſions of his whole army, and the like (which are only allegorical expreſſions, ſignifying a mamma's giving up her ſon to the fire of his paſſions, carrying her daughter to the maſquerade, and conſuming the ſubſtance of her huſband) he not only thought her in the wrong, but had the raſhneſs to tell her ſo. Here begins the miſery of this royal and once happy couple; the queen ſeparates herſelf from her huſband, and at the end of ten whole years, conſents to cohabitation upon

upon no other terms than a renewal of the old promiſe, ratified by an oath. The ſtory adds, that the king of China, having ſeen his error, never failed to acknowledge the wiſdom of his queen in all ſhe did, and that they lived to an extreme old age, the happieſt monarchs of the eaſt.

If every huſband in England was to read this ſtory night and morning till he had got it by heart; and, in imitation of the king of China, if he would conſider himſelf as a mere ſon of Adam, and his wife of the ſuperior nature of the Genies, the happineſs of his life would in all probability be ſecured: for I am fully perſuaded that all the infelicities of the married ſtate are occaſioned by men's finding fault with the conduct of their wives, and imagining themſelves to be fitter for goverment than for obedience.

For my own part, I have always looked upon the huſband to be the head of his wife, juſt in the ſame manner as a fountain is the head of a ſtream; which only finds ſupplies for it's wanderings, without directing the current which way it ſhall flow. It may poſſibly be objected that wives are commanded in a certain book, called the bible, to be obedient to their huſbands; but a lady of my acquaintance, who is a great caſuiſt in divinity, ſeems to have ſet this matter in a true light, by obſerving, that as moſt of the commentators upon the new teſtament have agreed that ſome of it's particular commands and prohibitions are merely local and temporary, and intended only as cautions to the chriſtians againſt giving ſcandal to the jews and heathens, among whom they lived; ſhe makes no manner of doubt that obedience to huſbands was among the number of theſe commands, and that it might be right to obſerve it in the infancy of chriſtianity, but not now.

Many

MANY perſons as well chriſtians as others, are of opinion, that to command is neither the province of the wife nor the huſband; and that to adviſe or entreat is all that either has a right to. But this I take to be wrong policy; for as every private family is a little ſtate within itſelf, there ſhould be a ſuperior and laws, or all will be anarchy and confuſion: and as it is indiſputable that the wife knows more of family affairs than the huſband, there is no reaſon in the world for taking the command out of her hands.

EVERYBODY ſees that when men keep miſtreſſes they commence ſubjects under an abſolute tyranny; and that a wife ſhould have leſs authority, is, in my own private opinion, a very hard caſe; eſpecially if it be conſidered, that ſhe is not only one fleſh with her huſband, but, as the univerſal phraſe is, his BETTER PART. Everybody knows too, that good-humour in a wife is the moſt neceſſary of all the virtues to ſecure the happineſs of a huſband; and how is her good-humour to be preſerved, if ſhe is to be under perpetual controul? It is no new diſcovery, that the firſt wiſh of a woman is power; if therefore you give the ſcepter into her hand, and entreat her to ſay and to do according to her own good pleaſure, it will be almoſt impoſſible for her to be always out of temper.

BUT the ſubordination of huſbands will appear to be of greater neceſſity, if it be conſidered how unfit almoſt every man is to govern himſelf. I have known huſbands of hopeful diſpoſitions, who from being left entirely to their own management, have run into every exceſs of riot and debauchery; when it has been obvious, that had their wives exerted the proper authority over them, they would have made the ſobereſt and the meekeſt

meekeſt men alive. How thankful therefore ought we to be, that our wives are enclined to take upon themſelves the troubleſome office of government, and to leave to their huſbands the eaſy duty of obedience, which a child of ſix years old is as capable of performing, as his father of forty!

I HAVE indeed heard it objected, that all women are not ſufficiently qualified for the government of their huſbands. But by whom is this objection made? By ſome obſtinate old batchelor, who for want of converſing with the ſex, has formed very erroneous opinions of their dignity and abilities. To decide this queſtion, I would only appeal to thoſe hnſbands, who have lived in a conſtant ſtate of ſubjection to their wives; and if any one of them dare tell me that he has once wiſhed to be his own maſter, I will be a batchelor in unbelief. It has alſo been objected, that the tyranny of a wife may ſometimes be a little more abſolute than the huſband may wiſh it to be; but it has always been a maxim, that an abſolute monarchy is the beſt, provided that we know, and have a right of chuſing our ruler: the huſband therefore ſhould be ſatisfied with a ſmall extenſion of the prerogative, whoſe monarch is not only of his own chuſing, but one whom he has courted to reign over him.

IT is matter of no ſmall ſatisfaction to me, that by vindicating the ſovereignty of the ladies, I am doing ſervice to my king and country: for while men are kept under a continued ſtate of ſubjection at home, they will ſubmit with more alacrity to the laws, and feel a deficiency of thoſe ſpirits, which for want of proper controul, might lead them into riots, inſurrections and rebellions. It were to be wiſhed indeed that the ladies would